

Community Profile: La Montañita

Estelí, Nicaragua

The community La Montañita in Estelí is located around 10 kilometres at the east of the city of Estelí and consists of around 300 people of more than 50 families from which many of them are peasants growing basic grains like corn and beans for own consumption and sale of their surpluses. Moreover, many families have cows for milk production and *cuajada*, a special cheese made from curd as well as pigs to sell as breeding stock and hens for eggs and meat. In addition, other crops and fruits like coffee, lemons, oranges, papaya and passion fruit are produced.

Located in a beautiful landscape, the communality and shared spirit of the Sandinista Revolution form an integral part of the community. Family and community life are very important. Often, families are very large and live close to each other, so the bonds of family are very strong. Also, the community helps and supports each other where they can.

Since the 1970s when the Sandinista Front began to organise undercover to plan the revolution against the Somoza dictatorship, La Montañita was a place of refuge and its inhabitants collaborated with the Sandinistas and against Somoza. The leader of the community, Marcelino Cruz who participated in the Sandinista Revolution and many other members of the community can share interesting histories and experiences of themselves which are often interwoven with the revolutionary history of Nicaragua as a country.

Furthermore, in the 1980s the community experienced the agrarian reform and alphabetisation of the adults in the area. The ATC supports La Montañita as well in topics like the agrarian reform, alphabetisation but also the defense of their rights and the general improvement of their qualities of life. The ATC also engages in encouraging the youth to work in agriculture and agroecology. They support the community to use agroecological methods for agriculture which helps sustain the beautiful landscape around La Montañita and is also healthier for the planet, nature and the people's health.

At the same time, the community faces difficulties regarding climate change. Unemployment is also a challenge, leading many people to sell firewood for domestic consumption in the city many young people go to the city of Estelí to work in the tobacco industry. Related problems in the area are deforestation, a lack of water, irregular rainy seasons and low yields.

With the help of the ATC, different programs, projects and workshops got developed in the area e.g. cooperatives and associations of producers, financial and cultural programs, sports promotion, education, employment opportunities and the integration of women and youth which strengthens the community socially, economically, culturally and politically.

Created by Friends of the ATC

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